Vermont Mental Health Performance Indicator Project

DDMHS, Weeks Building, 103 South Main Street, Waterbury, VT 05671-1601 (802-241-2638)

MEMORANDUM

TO: Vermont Mental Health Performance Indicator Project
Advisory Group and Interested Parties

FROM: John Pandiani
Monica Simon

DATE: November 16, 2001

RE: Participation on Standardized Tests of "Reading: Basic Understanding"

For corrected data tables see www.state.vt.us/dmh/Data/PIPs/2002/pip020602.pdf.

On September 28, we distributed the results of our first analysis of rates at which young people participate in Vermont's statewide New Standards Reference Exams educational testing program (www.state.vt.us/dmh/Data/PIPs/2001/pip092801.pdf). This report focused on the number of young people who completed the *Mathematics Skills Assessment*. It compared rates of test participation for each of Vermont's ten community mental health Children's Services Programs to rates for the total population of young people in each region. Results indicated that young people served by community mental health programs were significantly less likely to participate in the standardized testing procedure than total population of young people in the same age group in every region of the state. There were also significant differences among regions of the state in the relative rate at which mental health service recipients participated in the mathematics tests.

This week's Performance Indicator Project Report replicates that earlier work using *Reading: Basic Understanding* test scores. This analysis was conducted in response to requests that we expand our focus to include English/Language Arts tests. As in the earlier analysis, school participation is defined by completion of the specified test at the 4th, 8th, and 10th grade levels. Young people who were tested at the age appropriate grade level or were tested at that grade level one year later are considered to have participated for purposes of this analysis. The CMHC population included young people who were served by community mental health Children's Services Programs during 1998 and 1999. The total population included all young people in this same age group.

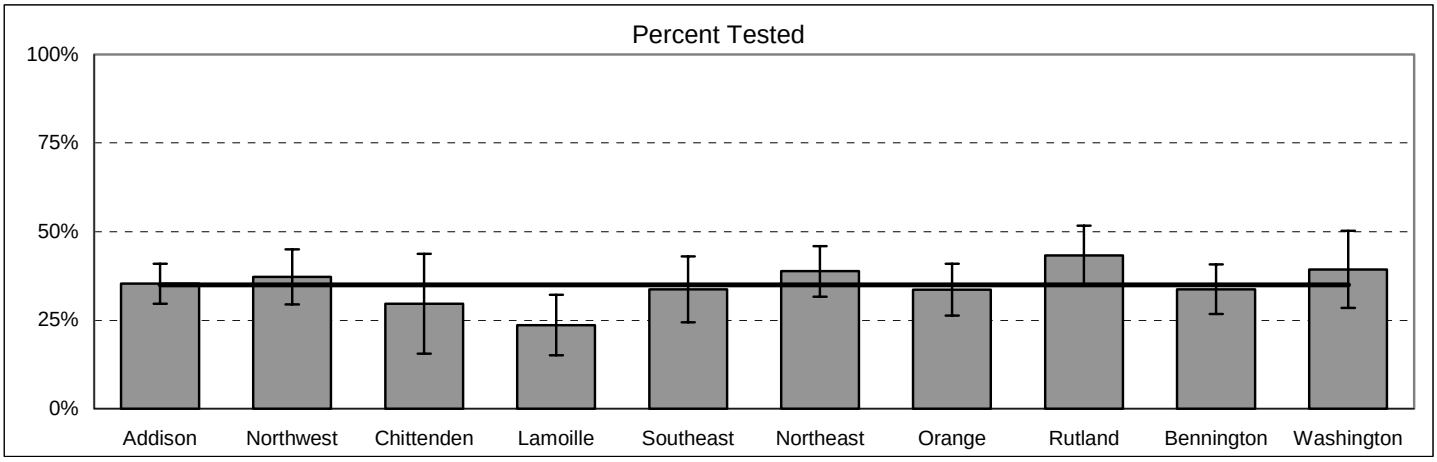
As you will see, young people served by community mental health programs were less likely to complete the Basic Reading testing than others in the same age group. Approximately 35% of CMHC clients participated, compared to 62% of all Vermont young people in the specified age groups. The rate at which service recipients participated in the testing program varied from 43% in Rutland County to 24% in Lamoille County. It is interesting to note that fewer CMHC clients completed the English tests that completed the Math Skills test (35% vs. 40%), while the same number of students completed both tests in the population as a whole.

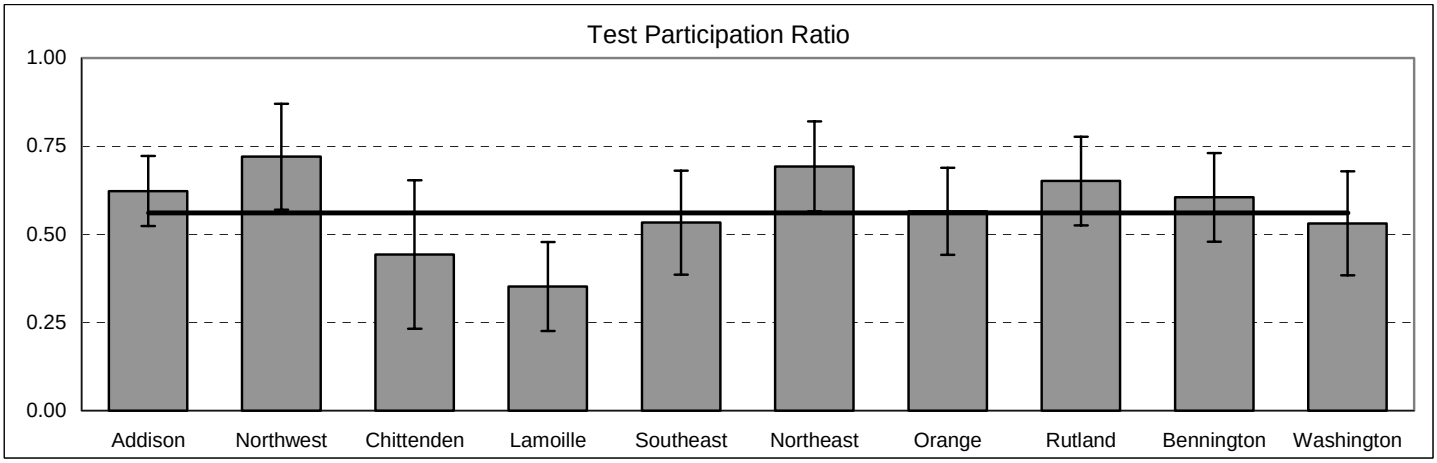
When we take into account variation among regions of the state in the rate at which the total population of young people were tested, Northwestern Vermont had a significantly higher Test Participation Ratio (more clients are tested) than the state as a whole (0.72 compared to 0.56) and Lamoille County had a lower test participation rates than the state as a whole (0.35 compared to 0.56 for the state). Overall, however, the pattern of differences among regions of the state with regards to rates of participation in the *Reading: Basic Understanding* and the *Mathematics Skills Assessment* tests were very similar.

It is important to note that the school participation rates reported here are different from the test participation rates reported by the Department of Education. This difference occurs because test participation rates are generally reported as a proportion of all students enrolled in public schools. Our school participation rates are the proportion of all young people in the specified age group (based on age specific total population estimates). This population-based comparison is more appropriate for our focus on young people who received community mental health services since that group will include young people who were not enrolled in school. Some of the young people who were not enrolled in public school would have been enrolled in private, parochial, or other schools. Some would have been participating in a home school program, and some would not have been enrolled in any school.

We look forward to your comments, questions, and suggestions for further analysis. As always you can reach us by e-mail at jpandiani@ddmhs.state.vt.us or by phone at 802-241-2638.

Participation in Statewide *Reading: Basic Understanding* Assessment
For Young People Served by Community Mental Health Centers and Other Young People
1998 - 2000





	Young People Served by CMHCs			Total Population Tested	Test Participation Ratio
	Number Served	Number Tested	Percent Tested		
State	2,174 ± 16	761 + 74	35% ± 3%	62%	0.56 ± 0.05
Addison	202	71 ± 11	35% ± 6%	57%	0.62 ± 0.10
Northwest	164	61 ± 13	37% ± 8%	52%	0.72 ± 0.15
Chittenden	351	104 ± 49	30% ± 14%	67%	0.44 ± 0.21
Lamoille	59	14 ± 5	24% ± 8%	67%	0.35 ± 0.13
Southeast	401	135 ± 37	34% ± 9%	63%	0.53 ± 0.15
Northeast	317	123 ± 23	39% ± 7%	56%	0.69 ± 0.13
Orange	165	55 ± 12	34% ± 7%	59%	0.57 ± 0.12
Rutland	208	90 ± 17	43% ± 8%	66%	0.65 ± 0.13
Bennington	144	49 ± 10	34% ± 7%	56%	0.61 ± 0.13
Washington	152	60 ± 17	39% ± 11%	74%	0.53 ± 0.15

Test Participation includes young people who completed the specified New Standards Reference Exam and includes individuals who were tested on grade level or one year later. Test Participation Ratio is the ratio of the percent of young people tested who were served by a CMHC and the percent of young people tested in the general population.

Analysis is based on Monthly Service Reports provided to DDMHS by the community mental health centers and data provided by The Department of Education. Because these data sets do not share unique person identifers, Probabilistic Population Estimation was used to provide unduplicated counts of individuals shared across data sets (with 95% confidence intervals).